

Health Information Administrator

Definition of Health Information Management

The health information management profession includes managers, technicians, and specialists expert in systems and processes for health information management, including:

- **Planning:** Formulating strategic, functional, and user requirements for health information
- **Engineering:** Designing information flow, data models, and definitions
- **Administration:** Managing data collection and storage, information retrieval, and release
- **Application:** Analyzing, interpreting, classifying, and coding data and facilitating information use by others
- **Policy:** Establishing and implementing security, confidentiality, retention, integrity, and access standards



Career Description

Graduates of baccalaureate degree educational programs in health information management are known as health information administrators and apply their training and expertise in both science and management to develop, implement, and/or provide oversight to health care data collection and reporting systems to assure the integrity and availability of the information resources needed to support authorized users and decision-makers. Health information managers have expertise in developing and managing effective processes and systems to assure the integrity of health care data and to preserve the complete, accurate, and legal source of patient data (patient medical records), as well as expertise in developing and managing effective processes and systems to preserve patient privacy, confidentiality, and the security of health information maintained in paper or computerized systems. Common job titles held by health information administrators in today's job market are related to line, staff, and/or technical positions such as director, assistant director, manager, privacy officer, compliance officer, claims analyst, clinical information specialist, HIM educator, etc. It is anticipated that job titles will change (eg, health information engineer, clinical information coordinator, data administrator, information security officer) as health care enterprises expand their reliance on information systems and technology. Health information administrators have, and will continue to assume, roles that directly contribute to the development of computer-based patient record systems and a national health information infrastructure.

The tasks or functions performed by health information administrators are numerous and are continually changing within the work environment. Although the job title and work setting will dictate the actual tasks performed by the health information administrator, in general this individual performs tasks related to the management of health information and the systems used to collect, store, process, retrieve, analyze, disseminate, and communicate that information, regardless of the physical medium in which information is maintained. In addition, health information administrators assess the uses of information and identify what information is available and where there are inconsistencies, gaps, and duplications in health data sources. They are capable of planning and designing systems and serving as pivotal team members in the development of computer-based patient record systems and other enterprise-wide information systems. Their responsibilities also

include serving as brokers of information services. Among the information services provided are a design and requirements definition for clinical and administrative systems development, data administration, data quality management, data security management, decision support design and data analyses, and management of information-intensive areas such as clinical quality/performance assessment and utilization and case management.



Employment Characteristics

Presently, opportunities for practice are found in numerous settings such as acute care general hospitals, managed care organizations, consulting firms, claims and reimbursement organizations, accounting firms, home health care agencies, long-term care facilities, corrections facilities, drug companies, behavioral health care organizations, insurance companies, state and federal health care agencies, and public health care computing industries. Practice opportunities are unlimited.



Salary

According to the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), entry-level salaries average between \$40,000 and \$75,000. For more information, refer to www.ama-assn.org/go/hpsalary.



Educational Programs

Length. Baccalaureate degree programs are 4 years. Post-baccalaureate and other certificate programs are generally 1 year.

Prerequisites. Applicants for the 4-year baccalaureate degree program should have a high school diploma or equivalent. Applicants for the 1-year post-baccalaureate certificate program should have a baccalaureate degree that includes coursework in science and statistics, as specified.

Curriculum. The preprofessional curriculum should include appropriate general education credit predicated on the requirements of the academic institution. The professional curriculum requires:

- Biomedical sciences (anatomy, physiology, language of medicine, pharmacology, and disease processes)
- Information technology (microcomputer applications, programming, system architectures and operating systems, introduction to database concepts, and data communications)
- Health care delivery systems
- Legal aspects of health care and ethical issues
- Organization and management (managerial principles, human resources management and development, financial management for health care, organizational behavior, and interpersonal skills)
- Quantitative methods and research methodologies (introductory and advanced health care statistics/epidemiology, research methods in health care)
- Health care information requirements and standards
- Health care information systems (computer applications in health care, systems analysis and design)
- Health data content and structures, classification, nomenclature and reimbursement systems, clinical quality assessment, and performance improvement

- Biomedical and health services research support
- Health information services management
- A capstone experience/practicum/project



Inquiries

Careers

www.healthinformationcareers.com

Professional Credentialing

American Health Information Management Association
233 N Michigan Avenue, Suite 2150
Chicago, IL 60601-5800

312 233-1100
www.ahima.org

Program Accreditation

Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and
Information Management Education (CAHIIM)
233 N Michigan Avenue, Suite 2150
Chicago, IL 60601-5800
312 233-1100
312 233-1429 Fax
www.cahiim.org